(e) if so, in how many cases employers were punished during the year 1986; and

(f) how many cases are pending final disposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 has been extended to all the States/Union Territories except Sikkim.

(d) Yes, Sir. The Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) Organisation of the Ministry of Labour handles the disputes under Industries Disputes Act, between the ogricultural labourers and their employers in respect of those Schedule employments in relation to which Central Government is the appropriate Government. The disputes in respect of those employments in relation to which State Government is the appropriate Government are dealt with by the respective State Governments.

(e) and (f) As far as Central Government is concerned, no employer was punished during the year 1986 and no case is pending. Information in respect of State Government is not maintained by the Central Government.

Child Labour

735. SHRIMATI BIJOY CHAKRAVARTY:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total numebr of child labour in the country;

(b) whether there is any scheme with the Central Government to solve this problem in a phased manner; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) As on March, 1985 the number of working children was 17.38 million as estimated by the Planning Commission.

(b) and (c) A statement is enclosed.

Statement

Government have taken the following measures/schemes towards the progressive elimination of child labour:

(1) The employment of children has been banned in factories, mines and certain other hazardous employments.

(2) The Employment of Children Act which bans the employment of children below 14 years and 15 years of age in certain employments has been amended to make the penalty for violation of its provisions more stringent.

(3) A Central Advisory Board on Child Labour has been set up to render advice to the Central Government on the problems of child labour. The terms of reference states among other things, that the Board would (a) sugegst legislative measures as well as welfare measures for the welfare of working children, and (b) review the progress of welfare measures for working children. Several State Governments/UnionTerritories have also set up such Advisory Boards on Child Labour.

(4) Two pilot projects to protect and lookafter the welfare of (1) Children working in match industry in and around Sivakasi (2) Carpet weaving children of Mirzapur-Bhadohi area of U.P. have been taken uo by the Ministry of Labour. The Sivakasi project has been launched in April, 1986. The Mirzapur-

Bhadohi project is being finalised in consultation with the Government of U.P. and Ministries concerned.

(5) Voluntary Organisations of child labour are being given financial assistance for action projects relating to nutrition, health, non-formal education and vocational training of working children.

(6) A Bill entitled "The Child Labour" (Prohibition & Regulation), Bill, 1986 has been passed in the Rajya Sabha on 5-11-86 which intends to:—

(a) ban children below 14 years from certain industries and identify further industries/employments from which they should be banned;

(b) regulate the working conditions of children in other employments;

(c) enhance the penalties for violation of provisions relating to the employment of children

Setting up of Industrial Labour Commission

736. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up Industrial Labour Commission/Committee to settle industrial disputes etc; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal and the amount sanctioned for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) Some proposals including the proposal for the setting up of Industrial Relations Commissions/High Powered Tribunals comprising judicial and non-judicial members, both at the Centre and in the States, were considered by the Standing Labour Committee at its meeting held on 22nd and 23rd September, 1986. The functions of these Commissions/Tribunals include adjudication of industrial disputes and hearing of appeals against the final orders of the Labour Courts.

There was wide ranging exchange of views from the members of the Committee, representing workers, employers and the Government. It was recognised that the existing disputes settlement mechanisms and structures need substantial change and the Government may keep in mind the various view points expressed in the Committee while formulating its final proposals in this regard. Government has not taken a decision in the matter and no amount has been sanctioned for the purpose.

Special leaves filed in the Supreme Court by RBI in the case of Peerless General Finance and Investment Company

737. SHRI RAM CHANDRA VIKAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Reserve Bank of India has filed an appeal for special leave in the Supreme Court against the judgement of the Calcutta High Court to the effect that activities of the Peerless General Finance and Investment Company did not attract the provisions of the Prize Chits and Money Circulation Scheme (Banning) Act, 1978;

(b) if so, whether the Government are aware that this decision has created a standstill in the activities of the Company and there is no payment to the depisit holders of their matured claims; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to ensure that there is no interruption in the payment to deposit holders of their claims?